

Cuts in vital services make way for tax breaks for millionaires

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WASHINGTON, DC—U.S. Congressman Peter DeFazio voted against the House Republican budget resolution yesterday that will make deficits worse, continue tax cuts for the wealthy, borrow and spend every single penny of the Social Security surplus, and fail to adequately fund key priorities including health care, veterans' benefits, education, and Homeland Security. The legislation passed the House by a vote of 218 to 210.

“This legislation reveals the true priorities of the Republican majority in Congress,” DeFazio said. “It attempts to balance the budget on the backs of students, seniors, working Americans, veterans, patients, and the environment to make way for billions in additional tax cuts primarily aimed at the wealthiest among us.

“Over the next five years, the budget will freeze funding for health care research. It includes the largest cuts to education in 23 years. Even those who have served our country in the military are forced to sacrifice in order to fund tax cuts for millionaires. Under the Republican budget, veterans' health care will be cut by \$6 billion over the next five years.

“In addition, this budget will set a new record for deficits. This year will be the fifth consecutive year of the largest deficits in our nation's history. This budget will also increase the national debt by another \$2.3 trillion. And, it borrows every single penny of the Social Security surplus to pay for other spending and tax cuts for the Paris Hiltons in the country.

“I supported a budget alternative that better reflects the needs and priorities of the American people. The budget I supported would balance the budget by 2012 and yet better fund vital services. It would provide more funding for health care, education, and first responders. And, it would extend tax relief for middle class families, including the child tax credit and marriage penalty relief, while requiring millionaires and billionaires to pay their fair share.

"It is time to return to the fiscal responsibility of the 1990s that helped balance the budget and contributed to sustained and strong economic growth that benefited all Americans, not just those in corporate boardrooms and sprawling mansions. It is time to give more of a helping hand to middle income and working America and let the rich help carry their fair share of the load. It is time for new priorities in this Congress."